

The University of Chicago

RELIGION AND THE CONSUMERS'
CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL IN
CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR
OF PHILOSOPHY

1938

By
WILLIAM HOYT MOORE

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General Description of Study

Objective of the Study.--This investigation begins with the hypothesis that the extent of recent Christian interest in the co-operative movement warrants study of the relationship between religion and co-operation. The assertion by Kagawa that "Co-operatives are Christianity in action" exemplifies the attitude which suggested this dissertation topic. The objective of the study is the determination of the relationship existing in the past, and the advantages and disadvantages of possible connections in the future.

Scope.--Consumers' co-operation (as contrasted with such other types as marketing co-operatives, producers' co-operatives, and credit unions) claims religious support because of its unique willingness to admit anyone to membership. Furthermore, those religious leaders who have directed the interest of American Christians toward co-operation have tended to stress the consumers' movement. Accordingly, this investigation is limited to the relationships between religion and consumers' co-operation.

Approach.--The dissertation approaches its subject in three ways--by history, by theory, and by modified case study methods. It investigates the nature of historical relationships between religion and co-operation (Chapters I-VIII). It attempts to systematize expressions of opinions by qualified leaders who have discussed the relationship (Chapters IX-XV). It seeks empirical validation through experiences in the field of student co-operation (Chapter XVI). Until the two final chapters, it confines itself to the presentation of relevant data, reserving all evaluation and appraisal for the conclusions. Chapters I through XV are summarized below; Chapters XVI and XVII are presented in full.

Theses.--From this dissertation emerge three theses. Religion and co-operatives have been joined by incidental, by instrumental, and by essential relationships. The religious values in co-operation inhere more largely in the co-operative spirit

than in the type of co-operative organization. Christianity and co-operatives may be and should be mutually strengthening and supporting.

Summaries of Chapters

Chapter I. Conditions in England during the Rise of Co-operatives.--The co-operative movement began in England during a period of great and increasing distress. Through the later eighteenth century the condition of the peasantry was becoming steadily worse. The enclosure movement, technological unemployment, wars, population increase--all these factors combined to make miserable the life of the poor. The Church of England was conspicuously blind to the social evils of the day; it was almost altogether preoccupied with theological and academic minutiae. Even the Evangelicals were more concerned for Negro slaves abroad than for infant drudges in Lancashire mills.

Chapter II. Earliest Co-operative Organizations.--Investigation disclosed one rudimentary co-operative (1745) earlier by a quarter-century than any recorded in co-operative literature. All very early co-operative ideas show religious tinges of some sort. The first proposals reveal Quaker backgrounds; the first organizations were started by Church of England men. Their motives seem to have been mixed--dislike of high taxes for poor relief was blended with charitable impulses to help the poor.

Chapter III. Robert Owen.--Robert Owen's influence overshadowed the co-operative movement during its early stages. He was a self-made man in the usual sense of the term, except that his solicitude for the workers was so great that he voluntarily devoted his entire life and fortune to an effort to help them. He tried and failed in each of the following approaches: persuasion of manufacturers, legislation to curb abuses, the raising of capital to finance self-supporting colonies for the poor, and co-operative bazaars in which workers could barter their products. He spent the rest of his life campaigning for a New Moral World. The theological preoccupation of the churches, and those ideas of Christianity usually called Puritan, meant to him that Christianity was a harmful influence; accordingly in 1817 he denounced "all the religions of the world," and thereby earned the unrelenting antagonism of churchmen. The co-operative movement was so intertwined with Owen's propaganda that it too came under religious

disfavor.

Chapter IV. Dr. William King and The Co-operator.--Dr.

William King was an earnest Christian and churchman who felt that the beneficial possibilities of co-operation ought not to be allowed to remain obscured by Owen's theological misconceptions. Through his Co-operator in 1828 he set himself to explain the truly religious nature of co-operation, and its great usefulness in enabling the poor to help themselves. Though hundreds of co-operatives were started through the influence of Owen and King, they all failed.

Chapter V. The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers.--

By a change in technical procedure the Rochdale Pioneers in 1844 established the first successful consumers' co-operative--the plan of which has been used all over the world by tens of millions of people. Religious neutrality became one of their cardinal principles after the store had been jeopardized by quarrels caused by religious differences.

Chapter VI. Christian Socialism.--The uprisings of the year 1848 inspired a group of men who called themselves Christian Socialists--Kingsley, Maurice, Ludlow, and others--to unite to spread the social message of Christianity. First through their publications, then through producers' co-operatives, they tried to serve the poorer classes. When their producers' co-operatives failed one by one, the more practical Christian Socialists turned to the consumers' movement.

Chapter VII. Co-operative Wholesaling and Manufacturing.--

Ludlow, Hughes, and Neale were the most conspicuous of the Christian Socialists who continued to work with co-operatives down to the end of the century. They wielded a profound influence, directed chiefly toward helping the laborers. As contrasted with the practical co-operators who, on behalf of the consumers, built the Co-operative Wholesale Society into Great Britain's largest business, they stood for producers' co-operation. They tried first to embody their ideas in independent producers' co-operatives; when these failed, with great loss to the consumer movement, they championed the sharing of profits with co-operative employees. Although their ideas were finally completely rejected, the movement acknowledges that these Christian Socialists did a great service in maintaining a spirit of idealism within the movement. In England at present religion and co-operatives seem to be almost

completely unconnected.

Chapter VIII. Other National Movements.--The Danish movement was very largely religious in its early leadership and motivation. It began primarily in the areas of education and marketing, and only later took up consumers' co-operation. Bishop Grundtvig, who started the folk-school movement, and his follower, Pastor Sonne, who started the first consumers' co-operative, were both religious men avowedly working for religious ends through their co-operative ventures. The Canadian and Chinese movements have had much Christian leadership; the Indian credit union movement was aided by missionaries to a slight extent. The Russian, Swedish, and French movements were unrelated to religion. The Belgian, Italian, and Slavonic movements have been seriously hampered by religious divisions.

Chapter IX. Objective Appraisals.--Economists, and others not directly involved in the co-operative movement, largely agree that it cannot accomplish, in any near future, all that its advocates claim for it. It has both inherent limitations and human problems, but its basis is essentially sound and its influence is fundamentally constructive. A more detailed summary of these judgments is presented later.

Chapter X. Hostile or Neutral Attitudes.--Some critics feel that co-operatives are too radical, others that they are too conservative. Many religious people and co-operators feel that their activities have nothing in common. Some Christians believe that the secular nature of co-operatives makes them unacceptable for Christian purposes; most co-operators feel that religious divisiveness endangers co-operation.

Chapter XI. Instrumental Relationships.--Quotations grouped in this chapter include these assertions of instrumental relationships wherein either co-operation or religion is useful to the other: Christianity, if it is to survive, needs a co-operative society; co-operation encourages such Christian virtues as honesty and unselfishness; co-operation serves such Christian causes as peace, temperance, democracy, and racial good will; co-operation helps ministers in their parishes and in their preaching; religion helps co-operatives by furnishing trained leadership (especially for educational work) and by generating the co-operative spirit.

Chapter XII. Incidental Relationships.--In this chapter

are grouped instances showing that between the co-operative movement and the churches there exist connections which are neither instrumental nor essential, but superficial or incidental. The type is illustrated by a co-operative manager licensed to perform marriage ceremonies.

Chapter XIII. Essential Relationships.--Certain connections between religion and co-operation are believed by many observers to be so close as to be deemed essential relationships. These stress chiefly the kinship of the attitudes, behavior, and goals desired by the two movements.

Chapter XIV. Formal Actions by Church Bodies.--Church bodies which have in one way or another commended the co-operative movement include the following: in the United States, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, the Congregational-Christian Churches, the Northern Baptist Convention, the Ohio Council of Churches, the Reformed Church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the Friends' General Conference; and elsewhere, the United Church of Canada, the Friends in England, the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship, and the Oxford World Conference on Church, Community and State.

Chapter XV. The Catholic Attitude.--Representative comments by Catholics reveal a contrast between their attitude and Protestant opinions. Catholics show more moderation and less diversity.

CONCLUSIONS BASED ON STUDENT CO-OPERATIVES

In this dissertation the subject has been approached through an historical survey and through an analysis of theoretical material; now it is to be discussed against a background of a factual investigation of student co-operatives. Here the writer will present conclusions drawn from experiences with co-operatives rather than from books. Although to the reader this section can hardly avoid seeming to be simply another testimonial to certain phases of the subject, to the writer it represents a positiveness of conviction attainable only through personal experience.

Several reasons combined to make the student field suit-

able for this purpose. First the student co-operative movement offers extreme diversity of conditions, and attempts a very wide range of objectives, thus presenting what may be regarded from many points of view as a sort of microcosm of the consumers' co-operative. Second, in the United States it has been more closely connected with religion than has any other branch of the movement, and thus, for a study of this kind, it presents, proportionately, far more material than do other types of American co-operatives. Indeed, on an absolute basis, it may be said to involve most of the problems that have arisen from attempts to link religion and co-operation. Third, the field has never before been studied, despite demand for information about it. Finally, the writer occupies an official position which gives access to information otherwise unavailable.

The footnote¹ indicates the experiences out of which the

¹Altogether the writer has engaged in student co-operative work for three years. That experience includes the organization and management of a student dining club with sixty-five members, a term as its educational director, and the formation of the National Committee on Student Co-operatives. Chairmanship of that committee has involved three surveys of the movement, publication of various articles which are listed in the Bibliography, preparation of mimeographed material and a pamphlet to assist new groups, speaking at five national conventions and over a national radio hook-up, and efforts to form a Student Co-operative League. Hundreds of letters and interviews have been necessary, with persons from Hawaii to Switzerland. In October, 1936, at its Biennial Congress, the Co-operative League commended the efforts of the committee, and asked that they be continued; the League's assistant secretary has been most helpful. Activities of the committee have thus had the benefit of sponsorship by the official organ of the American consumers' co-operative movement.

A statistical summary of the student co-operative movement may be of interest:

EXTENT OF THE CAMPUS CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT 1938

	Members	Sales	Savings
47 Dormitories (146 units)	4,383	\$ 562,413	\$421,958
34 Dining Clubs.....	2,019	228,388	58,402
65 Book Stores.....	88,818	2,464,100	91,900
10 General.....	826	23,144	300*
29 Miscellaneous.....	1,810	259,500	*
185 Total (284 units).....	97,856	\$3,537,545	\$572,560

*Information inadequate.

remainder of this chapter will be drawn. Manifestly no formal report completely describing the activities of three years would be either feasible or worth while. Originally it was intended to present here a detailed description of student co-operation, but three difficulties arose. First, most of the findings were technical and statistical data which seemed out of place in a discussion of this type; accordingly they have been published elsewhere in articles listed in the Bibliography of this dissertation. Second, significant findings arose not out of specific incidents or situations, but out of the total set of experiences, of every sort. Third, in order to present the conclusions most important for this study, it becomes necessary to draw invidious comparisons of a sort which can best be done anonymously. For these reasons, instead of attempting to describe all religious aspects of the student movement, this chapter confines itself to a presentation of findings relevant to this dissertation, with illustrations of each.

Religious influences have played a large part in promoting student co-operatives. More than half of the requests for speeches came from religious groups, and forty per cent of all correspondence has a similar origin. Co-operatives with religious sponsorship include the large dormitory at Berkeley, California, conceived by the Young Men's Christian Association; dining clubs at Cornell sponsored by the university religious center; dining clubs at Madison, Wisconsin, started by the Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and Catholic student organizations there; dormitories at Moscow, Idaho, set up by the Latter Day Saints' Institute; and a co-operative house at Eugene, Oregon, assisted by the Young Men's Christian Association secretary. Many others could be listed.

The movement does have value to Christians for their purposes. Students at Eden Theological Seminary, for example, are using co-operative techniques to reduce expenses while they study for the ministry. The headquarters of student Christian movements are freely urging that local groups sponsor co-operative organizations in order to create for themselves a useful function. Some religious organizations allow only members of their own denomination to join co-operatives which they have sponsored, while other religious leaders privately admit that they are using co-operatives to attract students whom otherwise they could not reach. Some

Christians inspired by the social gospel turn to the student co-operative field to find an outlet for their enthusiasm for reform. Other individual Christians, from charitable reasons, are interested in the movement as a means of helping students secure education otherwise unavailable to them. At the University of Illinois a co-operative restaurant was formed by Jews and Protestants to help Negroes.

The co-operative movement gains converts and publicity through religious organizations. Many able students are originally attracted by the financial advantages of student co-operatives, and later develop such enthusiasm for co-operation that they continue as leaders in other co-operative work. Often the general movement has thus secured recruits from organizations started by religious leadership. "Followership" as well as leadership is provided in this way; many individuals who will never lead co-operative work do at least become sympathetic to the movement, and in later life will be available as members of ordinary co-operatives. Some professors and ministers interested in helping students turned to co-operation first for that reason, and later became propagandists for the general movement.

Co-operative techniques can be used for incompatible purposes. In a co-operation session of the American Student Union, devotion to co-operatives was expressed by Marxians, Protestants, Jews, atheists, and a Roman Catholic priest. Later the priest and the Communist each said privately that he felt that by means of co-operatives the ideas of the other could be fought! The remainder of the group would have rejected the goals of both. Evidently co-operation's instrumental values do not give it any essentially Christian nature.

The age of the organization has its effect. Older book stores seem to have had some co-operative fervor when they were started; in the same institutions it is now conspicuous by its absence. Apparently special requirements are imposed at early stages; as soon as an efficient organization is perfected, hired employees can often replace the creative enthusiasts who are indispensable at first.

The size of the co-operative affects its behavior. At Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College the co-operative dormitory organization operates over fifty units. Much experimentation over several years has convinced its manager that a group of about

twenty-five individuals functions most satisfactorily. One dining club which began during the depression with a small group of co-operative enthusiasts has been tremendously successful financially, but as it grew to have hundreds of members it lost all of its idealism. A co-operative can be too successful as well as too unsuccessful.

The extent of responsibility borne by members has an important bearing. An inconsistency apparent in earlier chapters concerns the twin claims that the movement confers material benefits and yet demands material sacrifice. That inconsistency can be resolved if one remembers that the organization will fail unless it can offer financial advantages to its members; this it cannot do unless it can secure capable leadership. Often the advantages conferred upon members arise because of the self-sacrificing loyalty of a few leaders. Particularly is this true at the beginning.

The homogeneity of the group is important. On one campus two dining clubs were begun under similar circumstances; one, with homogeneous membership, was immediately successful, while the other encountered many difficulties. Personal animosities engendered by the great diversity within the group caused much of its trouble. Political differences added to the friction.

The character and motivation of members affect the results. Of the two organizations just mentioned, the first was composed of people with the co-operative spirit; the second was composed of a group of individuals anxious for economy, but unwilling to assume responsibility within the organization. The presence of fanatics and of several persons with personality defects added another complication.

The type of organization seems to be very important in determining its effects on members. Many co-operative book stores at larger Eastern colleges, for example, have been operating for generations; they claim only to save money for students, and do not pretend to have any of the other virtues so freely claimed for co-operatives. Other organizations, especially co-operative dormitories and dining clubs, have been started by persons who, claiming no religious background or affiliations, have yet demonstrated various Christian virtues. The importance of the type of organization appears in a more extreme form at Chicago Theological Seminary, where Kimbark Dining Club seems to require and to pro-

duce the co-operative spirit, but where a co-operative book store, made up of the same members, struggled along and finally failed without demonstrating any such characteristic.

Organizations involving many personal relationships are far more likely to have significance for religious purposes than are organizations involving only the cash nexus. Some dining clubs have non-working guests who pay a higher price than do members who work; it has been found that without difficulty an unco-operative person can be allowed to pay and eat, but that trouble arises if he becomes a working member. If, however, he does work, the group confronts the problem of socializing his attitudes; their efforts to do so often achieve remarkable results.

The co-operative spirit seems to be the all-important factor. It is that somewhat nebulous quality which means that a man is dependable, responsible, friendly, willing to do his share and even to shoulder the burden if another member fails to do his tasks. Its opposite manifests itself through carping criticism, refusal to do work properly, and unsocial attitudes which are all too likely to prove contagious. A work co-operative, wherein members share the labor, cannot exist without the co-operative spirit on the part of most of its members; probably the same is true of producers' co-operatives. A co-operative which largely depends upon the cash nexus can succeed if it only saves money for its member-customers. During its early stages it may require members with the co-operative spirit; but it is fortunate if that spirit persists to any considerable extent. Apparently most organizations maintain this spirit on the part of their leaders; only at first, however, can it be required of all members. Membership will drop unless the organization is quickly able to reach the point at which the co-operative spirit is no longer required of the majority of its members.

A summary is now possible. Although co-operation as a technique lends itself to use for religious purposes, it is essentially no more Christian than the broom with which the sexton sweeps out the church. In its personal aspects, however, the movement both depends upon, and creates, the co-operative spirit, which is closely allied with religion. The greater the extent of personal relationship involved, the greater the dependence of the co-operative upon the Christian virtues, and also the greater the efforts of the organization to inculcate these virtues.

CONCLUSIONS

Reservations and Limitations

The field of effective co-operation seems to be limited. It is generally agreed that consumers' co-operatives can hope to enlist neither the very rich nor the very poor. The economists best qualified to judge conclude that the movement can hardly be expected to operate farms and railroads or to enter the heavy goods industries, such as steel mills and automobile factories. These fields demand such large investments, they experience such uncertain and variable demand, and they produce for such large markets, that it is hard to imagine co-operative organizations' being able to take them over for generations at least. All the strength of the British movement has not yet equipped it for any significant venture of this sort, and American co-operatives are far weaker. Indeed one would probably come much closer to the truth if he questioned the likelihood of the capture by co-operation of a dominant position even within consumers' goods industries and the service areas. Co-operatives have never had much success, for example, with merchandise for which the style factor is important. Paul H. Douglas and the Webbs, sympathetic though they are to co-operation, feel that the handling of all business by voluntary co-operatives is neither likely nor feasible. Thus it seems necessary, for economic reasons alone, to dismiss hope of achieving Kagawa's dreams within any reasonable period. His suggestion of world-wide co-operative insurance, bound up with the League of Nations, financing international trade in such a way as to eliminate imperialism and war, seems pathetically unrealistic on its face. Altogether Kagawa claims more than co-operation is ever likely to be able to accomplish.

Another limitation seems so obvious as hardly to need stating: the co-operative movement does, of course, operate only in this world, and can have little interest for those interested only in salvation for the next. Co-operation, in a religious view, is of chief interest for those who follow the social gospel, and for those who, though holding to an individual gospel, nonetheless see a need for the improvement of the environment wherein

individuals are placed.

A third limitation of co-operation is the very human one that it may, and often does, fall far short of its highest potentialities. The evidence previously presented proves that it has at times taken advantage of both workers and farmers.

While the fact that stalwart Republicans have endorsed the co-operative movement may mitigate the condemnation of the movement for radicalism, the fact still remains that in the eyes of many, co-operatives tend toward socialism; this may destroy their usefulness in some communities.

Again, co-operative organizations differ in the degree to which they deserve religious approval. Within the consumers' movement, the evidence indicates that the large, well-established societies tend to become preoccupied with economy, and to show little of the idealism that religious observers read into the system. Further, the members expect no more than that; except on the part of a few leaders, idealism seems lacking. Apparently any co-operative organization desiring to retain the interest of its members must constantly push into new fields; an organization which is marking time, or even growing at any steady rate, quickly has its problems referred altogether to hired managers. Many writers assert that because the consumer category is more inclusive than any other, consumers' co-operation most deserves religious commendation. If the analysis in the preceding chapter is correct, religion must stress the spirit of co-operation rather than the form of co-operation. The co-operative spirit is important to an organization in the degree to which the latter depends upon personal relationships. A large and well-established consumers' group may almost altogether substitute the cash nexus for personal relationships. An extreme illustration is provided by the large mutual life insurance companies; theoretically they differ from consumers' co-operatives only in permitting proxy voting and in specializing in one service, but they certainly present few of the Christian merits claimed for co-operation. The interest of religion in such a group then rests solely upon its instrumental value in improving the economic situation.

If that line of reasoning is followed a bit further, it appears that theoretical objections to marketing co-operatives should not mitigate heavily against religious approval for them. As Douglas says, city fears of farm monopolies have little basis

in economic probability. Certainly in the United States the marketing co-operatives are doing while the religious folk are largely talking. In any of the larger co-operative organizations the co-operative spirit can be prominent or deficient; its presence or absence is the chief concern of religion. The co-operative spirit is necessary in the leaders of most groups; it is important in members of credit unions, work co-operatives, and most small new organizations. If credit unions, medical marketing, consumers', or general-purpose co-operatives serve religious ends and involve the co-operative spirit; they deserve religious support--not otherwise. One must confess that the Catholics have seen more clearly than Protestants in this connection--they tend to look to the goal and the spirit more than to the theory.

Beyond these limitations of co-operation, there are dangers lurking in attempts to link religion and co-operation too closely.

Religion is likely to prove divisive. Belgium and Italy have clearly shown the danger that religious differences between members may split what would otherwise be a united movement. The Rochdale society itself encountered this threat; although the Pioneers were able to avoid it, other societies must be on their guard, or they may be less fortunate.

Religion may divert co-operatives from their fullest possibilities. Both leaders and members may be torn by dual loyalties. Religious projects may be substituted for co-operative objectives. One even remembers the story of the Mohammedan co-operator who spent so much time in the mosque that his fellow-members had to remonstrate lest he be thrown upon their charity!

Leadership coming to co-operatives from religion may be incompetent or misguided. This point is illustrated by the heavy losses of the British movement from the Christian Socialist insistence upon producers' co-operation. The average layman's disdain for clerical impracticability probably has a basis in fact; co-operation can hardly afford to entrust its future to leaders who are unbusinesslike, theoretical, or idealistic to the point of impracticability. The alarm manifested by some able co-operative leaders when Kagawa was exhorting churchmen to join co-operatives was based largely on this attitude, though it also contained an element of resentment of the implication that co-opera-

tives required salvation by church members.

Religious enthusiasts may bring fanaticism on other subjects. For example, Robert Owen's association with co-operation tarred it with his other ideas along religious, socialistic, and spiritualistic lines.

Religion, too, might suffer from too close connection with co-operation. Any human institution certainly will have imperfections; if those of co-operatives become too serious, they might reflect on the churches as sponsors. Furthermore, some co-operators are so zealous on behalf of political causes that they might embarrass conservative churchmen.

Incidental Relationships

Co-operative leadership seems to have come largely from individuals whose motivation was essentially religious, though perhaps not formally so. John Bellers, Bishop Barrington, and the Rev. Messrs. Glasse, Robert Owen, Dr. King, the Christian Socialists, Holyoake, Whitehead, Raiffeisen, Grundtvig, Cedric Long, Kagawa, E. R. Bowen--this list bears impressive testimony to the extent to which co-operative leaders have been known for their interest in religion, whether or not that interest followed orthodox patterns.

Key phrases in one movement seem curiously to overlap with those of the other. Religious folk stress "self-sacrifice," while co-operators stress the necessity of leadership willing to be content with the joy of serving without hope of large monetary reward. Religion speaks of "going the second mile," and co-operatives appeal to members to work beyond their normal quotas. Religion stresses unselfishness and generosity, and co-operation finds itself dependent upon the "co-operative spirit"--a willingness to be content with one's share, rather than seizing all one can, coupled with a willingness to contribute more than one's share. Religion talks about universal brotherhood, and co-operators talk of universality. "All for one and one for all" might serve as a motto for either group.

This sharing of leadership and of emphasis may be only accidental or incidental--it may be more than that. Certainly it at least exists.

Instrumental Connections

The last chapter told of the Communist and the Catholic, each of whom expected co-operatives to help vanquish the other. That incident demonstrates the non-religious nature of the co-operative technique. To cite another illustration, co-operatives have been used by Fascists in Italy, Communists in Russia, and Republicans in the United States. Evidently the co-operative technique is one which can be used under a wide variety of circumstances, and for a wide variety of objectives. Catholics, Protestants and free-thinkers have demonstrated that it can be put to the service of their respective efforts. The co-operative technique is a powerful instrument which can be used by religious people in their attempts to accomplish whatever objectives they desire. Furthermore, co-operatives as organized groups must have objectives of some sort; if Christians help to compose the membership, as members they can help to improve the character of those objectives. The fact that at its worst co-operation can be put to work for foul ends does not at all condemn it as an instrument for Christian use; rather it increases the need for Christians to help to direct it toward better goals.

Christians have many objectives for which co-operation might be put to work. Any program of Christian Social Action contains many such items; among the more important might be mentioned economic reforms, enhancement of inter-racial goodwill, the undergirding of world peace, and help for labor and agriculture.

Concreteness and practicability are not least among the advantages of co-operatives. What minister, calling upon his flock to improve the conditions which surround them, does not expect to be asked, "How?" A platitudinous call to repentance, divorced from tangible activity, is sterile. A pastor, preaching the social gospel, need no longer confine himself to words and to attacks on far-away problems; he can be specific in terms of local needs.

Essential Agreements

Persons forming a friendship often find that nothing helps so much as the discovery of mutual likes and dislikes, and thus it can be with organizations also. Certainly at their best reli-

gion and co-operation share many attitudes.

They have common antagonisms: each actively opposes dishonesty, extortion, injustice, exploitation, poverty, profiteering, alcoholism, war, the degradation of human beings, and all conditions leading to crime, vice, and degeneracy.

They have common enthusiasms: each actively seeks honesty, good faith, brotherliness, democracy, willingness by members to help each other, and the improvement of members' characters. Both of them seek an integrated, wholesome community, and both of them lay emphasis on seeing things whole, sub specie aeternitatis. They stand for peace among nations and races, and for universality.

Practical Aspects of the Relationship

How should co-operation be included in the program of the church? The usual prescription suggests that the church educate its members about co-operation; that prescription is probably about as definite as can be attempted on a national or denominational scale. Individual pastors, however, work in individual situations; those who have attempted to espouse co-operation as a movement have often encountered resentment among their more conservative parishioners. It seems unwise, or at least inexpedient, for most pastors to propose that their church set up a co-operative to compete with any organization existing in the community. Few are the communities, however, so blessed that there are no areas wherein supplementary services are needed. Normally there will be little objection if the pastor merely proposes that the community band itself together to secure some additional service, the need for which the group has already felt. If the strength of a single congregation does not suffice, the very fact of collaboration with other churches should prove a valuable means of drawing denominations closer together. Briefly put, the suggestion here advanced is that denominations undertake education about co-operatives of all sorts; that individual pastors in difficult situations confine their efforts to using co-operation, not to compete with existing services, but to supplement them in areas where the community's needs are yet unmet; and that pastors educate their parishioners about the co-operative movement if the people are ready for such teaching. This prescription follows several of the Catholic applications of co-operation, and seems

to have caused no difficulty for its sponsors.

Co-operation and Religion as Mutually
Supporting Movements

"Christianity supplies the dynamic--co-operation furnishes the technique." Kagawa's remark implies what it does not state: a co-operative without idealism lacks direction, and religion without implementation remains impotent. Each needs the other. "Consumers' co-operation is the chief consumer of the churches' goods." True, but religion also thrives on co-operation. Both require, and produce, brotherhood. Co-operation can help to advance the causes and interests of religion; religion is essential for the highest development of co-operation.

Co-operation functions as a tool wherewith the Christian can accomplish the social improvement which his religion demands of him. It helps Christianity by creating a seed-bed wherein religion can flourish, and wherein the weeds which would choke religion are themselves uprooted. It makes easier the Christian way of life.

Religion censures exploitation, and transmutes individual selfishness into group solidarity. It creates the attitudes necessary for co-operation, and fosters the state of mind which manifests itself in the co-operative spirit. It furnishes leaders afire with idealism and self-sacrificial devotion. It inspires co-operators to serve great causes, and holds forth the opportunity to collaborate in bringing the Kingdom of God on earth.

